

1379

TIMUR Conquers Persia

The last great Mongol conqueror was TIMUR LANG (TIMUR the same) or TAMERLANE, who aspired to rival the exploits of the great Khan, Genghis (from whom he claimed to be descended). From his base in Samarkand, in present day TURKESSTAN, which he ruled from 1369, Timur swept southward, conquering Persia in 1379, and advancing across the Euphrates to the Black Sea in 1392. Finally he

conquered India and brought the Delhi sultanate to an end by the sack of the capital in 1398.

In his cruelty, he was malevolent: 5,000 Indians are believed to have been slaughtered in the defense of Delhi and a pyramid built with their skulls. In his intolerance, he was exceptional for his era: he treated fellow Muslims as harshly as other believers, and Asiatic Christianity was almost eradicated by him.

Timur left little in the way of

achievement behind him, although an accidental consequence of his brief empire was that by winning a great victory over the Ottoman Turks of Anatolia at Angora (Ankara) in 1402, he delayed the Ottoman assault on Byzantium, whose life was thus prolonged. On his death in 1405 his lands were divided among his sons and his empire withered away.